



# NEWS RELEASE

## PRESS OFFICE

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**Contact:** Mike Stamler (202) 205-6740

**Internet Address:** [www.sba.gov/news/](http://www.sba.gov/news/)

## ***SBA FORGES OUTREACH PARTNERSHIP WITH FLORIST RETAILERS***

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) today formed a partnership with the major floral industry retail organization to join forces to encourage small business development and growth.

SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez signed a partnership agreement with John Looby, III, president of the Florists' Transworld Delivery Association (FTDA) at the group's annual conference in Las Vegas.

The agreement is designed to increase opportunities for existing small businesses and start-ups in the retail floral industry.

"Most florists are small business owners," said Administrator Alvarez. "This agreement establishes a collaborative effort between the SBA and the FTDA to help small businesses flower and bloom through the outreach efforts of our 70 SBA field offices throughout the country."

Under the terms of the agreement, SBA and FTDA will undertake a comprehensive outreach campaign to encourage start-up entrepreneurship in the retail floral industry.

SBA will provide program materials for FTDA to guide small business owners to agency programs and services, including business-plan development; loan prequalification; surety bonding, and financing, including such SBA loan and equity programs as Microloans, LowDoc, *SBAExpress*, *CommunityExpress* and the Small Business Investment Company programs. In addition, the two partners will promote SBA programs and technical services.

Finally, SBA and FTDA are committed to provide greater access to federal government procurement opportunities for small businesses, including the 8(a) and HUBZone programs, and the PRO-Net® database of federal procurement offerings.

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*For more information about all of SBA's programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U ASK SBA, or visit the SBA's extensive Web site at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).*

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